

## **WOUNDED KNEE BATTLEFIELD**

**11 miles west of Batesland, Pine Ridge Indian Reservation**

On December 29, 1890, the last major clash between Native Americans and U.S. troops in North America occurred here, in what has been called the Massacre at Wounded Knee. In the period following the introduction of the Ghost Dance religion among the Lakota and the killing of Sitting Bull, a band of his Sioux followers (120 men and 230 women and children) led by Big Foot left the Cheyenne River Reservation. Intercepted by U.S. cavalry troopers, they gave themselves up and were escorted to an army encampment on Pine Ridge Reservation, where they were to be disarmed. During the disarming, tempers flared and a shot rang out. The ensuing struggle, short but bloody, resulted in a number of army casualties (mostly from other troopers' fire) and the virtual massacre of Big Foot's band. The mass grave of the Indians is marked, and a museum provides interpretation of this site. As one of the Indian survivors recalled years later, "A people's dream died there." For soldiers and settlers, Wounded Knee marked the passing of the frontier.